

peasant farming in his *Principles of Political Economy*, which appeared in the same year (1848) as the *Communist Manifesto*, was vindicated by the course of history. The virility of peasant agriculture was an important contributing cause of the revisionist "heresy" and it affected, in an opportunistic sort of way, the agrarian policy of the European socialist parties. But all this made no impression on the official Marxist dogma of the growing socialist movement, which, during the quarter of a century preceding the First World War, played a more influential political role than during Marx's lifetime.

Even after the First World War, "The Socialists nowhere formally dropped the Marxist theory and policy from their programs; they often temporized in pressing it, or compromised on it in practice, but they always did so frankly as temporary expedients. The Communists played with the Marxist doctrine as they thought fit; they in turn proclaimed it solemnly anew or threw it overboard altogether if at any time their revolutionary bark seemed top-heavy." Still Dr. Mitrany concedes "that of all the parties belonging to the Second [Socialist] International, the British Labour Party alone continued to demand the nationalization of the land as an essential condition for any agrarian reform. On the Continent the old revisionist view was getting a more careful hearing than it had before, and the case for peasant farming was being put forward anew . . ."

Nevertheless, this tendency, as the author shows, had not gone far enough to heal the old political cleavage between the forces of agrarian and industrial democracies, between the socialists and the peasant parties, with the resulting annihilation of both by the Communist or fascist juggernauts.

Enough has been said, I think, to indicate that the story which Dr. Mitrany tells should be of vital interest to every student of social science. One may dissent on some points with his analysis, and may wish to qualify some of his statements. Thus, when the author declares, for instance, that "There has always been a 'curtain' somewhere between the Baltic and the Adriatic Seas . . .," an amendment should be made that, roughly between the end of the Crimean War, in the mid-19th Century, and the Bolshevik Revolution, in 1917, the "curtain" which divided Russia from the rest of the world was continuously being lifted. In general, there is discernible something of a physiocratic bias in the work. It may be argued that the author tips the scale, perhaps too far, in favor of the peasant in an effort to redress the imbalance that exists on the subject in the social science literature. But these are blemishes which detract little from the solid merits of the book. And not the least of its merits is the luminous style that makes this scholarly book delightful reading.

LAZAR VOLIN.

Washington, D.C.

The Operational Code of the Politburo. BY NATHAN LEITES. (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc. 1951. Pp. xv, 100. \$3.00.)

There is little need today to dramatize either the power of the Politburo or the difficulties experienced by the western mind in comprehending the

mentality and strategy of that body. These difficulties have not been eased by the multiplicity of studies of things Russian. Partisanship toward or against Communism and its related symbols and movements have combined with the exigencies of postwar propaganda to warp most if not all of the studies of Bolshevik politics. The riddle-cum-enigma has been complicated by increasing success of the Politburo's campaign to withhold essential facts from its own people and from the world. Russian institutes and centers and groups have attacked various phases of the problem of elucidation with varying success. It is reassuring indeed to see a major contribution to elucidation come from the pen of a single author.

The Operational Code of the Politburo is the effort of an immensely well-read and discriminating scholar to discover the rules which Bolsheviks believe necessary for effective political action. The present volume is unfortunately only part of a larger effort to deal comprehensively with this topic. It concentrates on the relations of the Communist Party to the outside world. It is not concerned with genesis. The fuller study will discuss intraparty relations, and try to show how Bolshevik concepts are related to Russian and western history and culture. It will treat the many connections between Bolshevik attitudes towards politics, and note the changes in them through time. Hence the present appraisal is tentative only. Since the major documentation is reserved for the later volume, the reader must rely chiefly on the author's skill in selection or in interpretation.

The rules of conduct presented are of three types: those explicitly stated by Lenin or Stalin; those fairly deducible from Soviet conduct and recognizable as such by Soviet practitioners; those fairly deducible from conduct but obscure to the Soviet politician. The rules apply to the party, not necessarily to the Soviet government. As a totality, they are Bolshevik, although individual items may be applicable to non-Bolshevik systems.

The analysis rests explicitly on the propositions that study of Bolshevik texts is valuable as a predictive aid since its practitioners are devotees of a secular religion; that the Politburo thinks its record to date is on balance successful and the success is due to application of "correct" Leninist-Stalinist principles; that international situations are comprehensible if they have a counterpart in early party history; and finally, that "Bolshevik attitudes toward power have not undergone any basic change since the conquest of power in Russia (or outside of Russia since 1939)." In other words, the Politburo regards itself in world politics as out of power and in a precarious position.

Exposition is organized into twenty short chapters covering the full range of standpoints from which the Politburo appraises situations with an eye to formulating policy. Each chapter includes one or more general rules of conduct, cites pertinent examples, and concludes with a few suggestions as to how recent Politburo behavior squares with the policy rules stated.

The careful reader will discern contradictions, ambiguities, and overlappings of treatment in the various chapters, especially in the formulations derived from Bolshevik texts. One can quarrel with the author on these limitations

only with difficulty; he admits and celebrates them. If one admits Bolshevik capacity to change the party line capriciously, one cannot worry too much about the presence in a code of conduct of divergent precepts. The question then becomes—when does the Politburo favor one or another course of action as the most expedient in terms of advancing the party's interest? Unhappily *The Operational Code* gives comparatively little help in predicting choice where alternatives are closely balanced. The riddle remains, although Mr. Leites has taught us a great deal about the rules and strategy of the game.

In passing, one must thank the Rand Corporation for making the results of this study available to the wide company of those outside government who are eager to have them. But why is a hundred page book of straight text priced at three dollars?

CHARLES A. H. THOMSON.

Brookings Institution.

Communism, Democracy, and Catholic Power. BY PAUL BLANSHARD. (Boston: Beacon Press. 1951. Pp. x, 340. \$3.50.)

Paul Blanshard's dramatic confrontation of Communist and Catholic "systems of power" is in many ways a courageous document. He poses the problem bluntly, and seems quite willing to assume the risks and responsibilities of dogmatic expression. He is probably right in supposing that only so sharp a statement will summon the attention that, in his view, the issue deserves. There is no doubt that anyone undertaking to discuss the politics of Catholicism exposes himself to the charge of religious bigotry. It is natural that the Church should interpret any criticism of its regime and its policies as an attack on its fundamental principles and ideals. Nevertheless, it is reasonable to insist that a powerful Church eschew the posture of a persecuted minority and accept the slings and arrows of public criticism in fair debate.

Unfortunately, Blanshard does not enter this controversy with entirely clean hands. Although he insists that his subject is politics and not religion, he finds it difficult to avoid speaking of various aspects of Catholic ritual and belief as "superstitions." Now and then, a distinctively Protestant interpretation of the theological legitimacy of Catholicism's vicarship is interposed. These remarks lend a tone that might better be absent in a treatment purporting to speak only of social and political policy. To be sure, ritual and doctrine are ingredients of the power system, and may not be ignored, but they can be dealt with free of gratuitous theological judgments. (However, it should also be said that the tone of the book, while not all it should be, hardly adds up to a strident anti-Catholic work.)

The real difficulties in Blanshard's study are of another order. They bear on the basic hypothesis itself. This affirms that totalitarian Bolshevism and authoritarian Catholicism are equivalent, both as assaults upon the human spirit and as threats to western political democracy. A choice between these like systems is, for the child of the Enlightenment, no true choice at all. And America must guard against being seduced into a self-defeating alliance with